

METHODS AND DEVICES FOR IMPROVING BREATHING IN PATIENTS WITH PULMONARY DISEASE

Abstract

Methods, apparatus, and kits for enhancing breathing in patients suffering from chronic pulmonary obstructive disease are described. The methods and apparatus rely on increasing flow resistance to expiration in a manner which mimics "pursed lip" breathing which has been found to benefit patients suffering from this disease. In a first example, a device is implanted in a trachea or bronchial passage to increase flow resistance, preferably selectively increase resistance to expiration relative to inspiration. In a second embodiment, a mouthpiece is provided, again to increase resistance to expiration, preferably with a lesser increase in flow resistance to inspiration. In a third embodiment, the patient's trachea or bronchial passage is modified by the application of energy in order to partially close the lumen therethrough.

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